

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-10 L-03 ACDA-12
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 SP-02 TRSE-00 DODE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 EB-08 /069 W
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O 251437Z APR 78
FM USMISSION USNATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1022
INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
ALL NATO CAPITALS
AMCONSUL NAPLES
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT
USNMR SHAPE BE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG
USLOSACLANT NORFOLK VA

S E C R E T USNATO 04202

E.O.11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: NATO, IT, UR
SUBJECT: ITALIAN CONCERN ABOUT SOVIET REQUEST FOR SHIP
REPAIR FACILITIES

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REFS: (A) STATE 10126 (DTG 200131Z APR 78), (B) STATE 96903
(DTG 150145Z APR 78), (C) USNATO 3738 (DTG 121839Z APR 78),
(D) NAPLES 702 (DTG 141858Z APR 78) NOTAL

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1. AMBASSADOR SAW ITALIAN PERMREP CATALANO APRIL 24 TO
FOLLOW UP ON LATTER'S REQUEST THAT WE CALL PRIVATE
MEETING TO CONSIDER ISSUE OF
SOVIET REQUESTS FOR ACCESS TO SHIP REPAIR FACILITIES IN
ITALY (REF C). CATALANO AGAIN INDICATED RELUCTANCE TO TAKE
INITIATIVE IN CALLING MEETING. AMBASSADOR, PER REF B,
SUGGESTED THAT LUNS COULD BRING UP THIS ISSUE ON HIS OWN
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OR COULD SIMPLY SAY "SEVERAL DELEGATIONS" HAD HEARD
REPORTS AND ASKED HIM TO RAISE SUBJECT. AMBASSADOR SUG-
GESTED TO CATALANO THAT SUBJECT BE CONSIDERED AT ALREADY
SCHEDULED APRIL 26 PRIVATE NAC SESSION ON SUMMIT ARRANGE-
MENTS (NOTE: ONLY DATE IN NEAR FUTURE WHEN LUNS WILL BE
AVAILABLE IS APRIL 26 AFTER WHICH HE WILL BE OUT OF
BRUSSELS UNTIL MAY 8. WE PREFER LUNS CHAIR SESSION RATHER

THAN HIS ITALIAN DEPUTY, PETRIGNANI, AND THUS SUGGESTED APRIL 26.). CATALANO AGREED WITH THIS APPROACH AND SAID HE WOULD WORK IT OUT WITH PETRIGNANI AND LUNS.

2. AMBASSADOR SAID THAT WE CONSIDERED MEETING EXPLORATORY AND WOULD NEED MORE INFORMATION ON THE SITUATION. TO ILLUSTRATE THIS LATTER POINT, HE DREW ON USEFUL INFORMATION CONTAINED IN REF D. CATALANO SAID THAT ITALIANS WERE ALSO SEEKING MORE INFORMATION AND LOOKED ON PRIVATE MEETING AS KIND OF CONSULTATION. OBVIOUSLY, IT IS OUT OF QUESTION FOR SOVIET WARSHIPS TO GAIN ACCESS TO ITALIAN FACILITIES; CERTAIN PORTS ARE SIMILARLY OUT OF BOUNDS TO ALL SOVIET SHIPS. HOWEVER, ITALIANS WANT TO KNOW WHAT OTHER COUNTRIES DO AND TO ASCERTAIN WHAT IS PERMISSABLE AND WHAT IS NOT.

3. COMMENT: CATALANO'S COMMENTS WOULD SEEM TO SUPPORT SURMISE PARA 2 REF B THAT ITALIANS WANT TO EXAMINE ALLIED PRACTICES TO CONSTRUCT A PACKAGE OF THEIR OWN. ON THE OTHER HAND, EXCHANGE OF VIEWS APRIL 26 WILL EXPOSE ITALY TO ALLIED CONCERN, WILL PROVIDE ADDITIONAL LEVER TO MONITOR ITALIAN DECISIONS ON SOVIET APPROACHES, AND KEEP THEM WITHIN ACCEPTABLE LIMITS. BENNETT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ALLIANCE, AGREEMENTS, COMMITTEE MEETINGS, PORT FACILITIES, NAVAL SHIPS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978USNATO04202
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780176-0704
Format: TEL
From: USNATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780418/aaaaaopv.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: e75dbca7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 10126, 78 STATE 96903
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2850486
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ITALIAN CONCERN ABOUT SOVIET REQUEST FOR SHIP REPAIR FACILITIES -
TAGS: MILI, IT, UR, NATO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e75dbca7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014